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14. ABSTRACT

The February 2013 issue of the Conflict Trends Report is the eleventh in a series of monthly publications from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED). This month's report provides an overview of violent conflict trends in Africa in January 2013, with a focus on events in Kenya, Mali, Egypt, Algeria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

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Real-Time Analysis of African Political Violence, February 2013

ABSTRACT

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Block 13: Supplementary Note

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This month's *Conflict Trends* report provides an overview of violent conflict trends and patterns in Africa in January 2013. We focus on developments in **Kenya** in advance of March's elections; **Mali** following the deployment of international troops in the north of the country; **Egypt** on the second anniversary of the uprising there; the **Democratic Republic of Congo** with the emergence of new actors in the already complex conflict environment in the east of the country; and **Algeria**, which was the centre of international attention in January with the dramatic unfolding of the hostage crisis in the east of the country (*see* Figure 1).

All analysis is based on ACLED real-time, geo-referenced data, which is available via the Climate Change and African Political Stability (CCAPS) project website. Data on African political violence from January 1997 to December 2012 is now available on ACLED's updated website, along with new trends analysis, maps and working papers.

In ACLED's continued efforts to provide the most comprehensive, publicly available and real-time data on political conflict in Africa, ACLED will be covering the **upcoming Kenya 2013 elections** in detail with up-to-date analysis, realtime data and regular mapping. Please check the ACLED website in coming weeks for more information on this project.
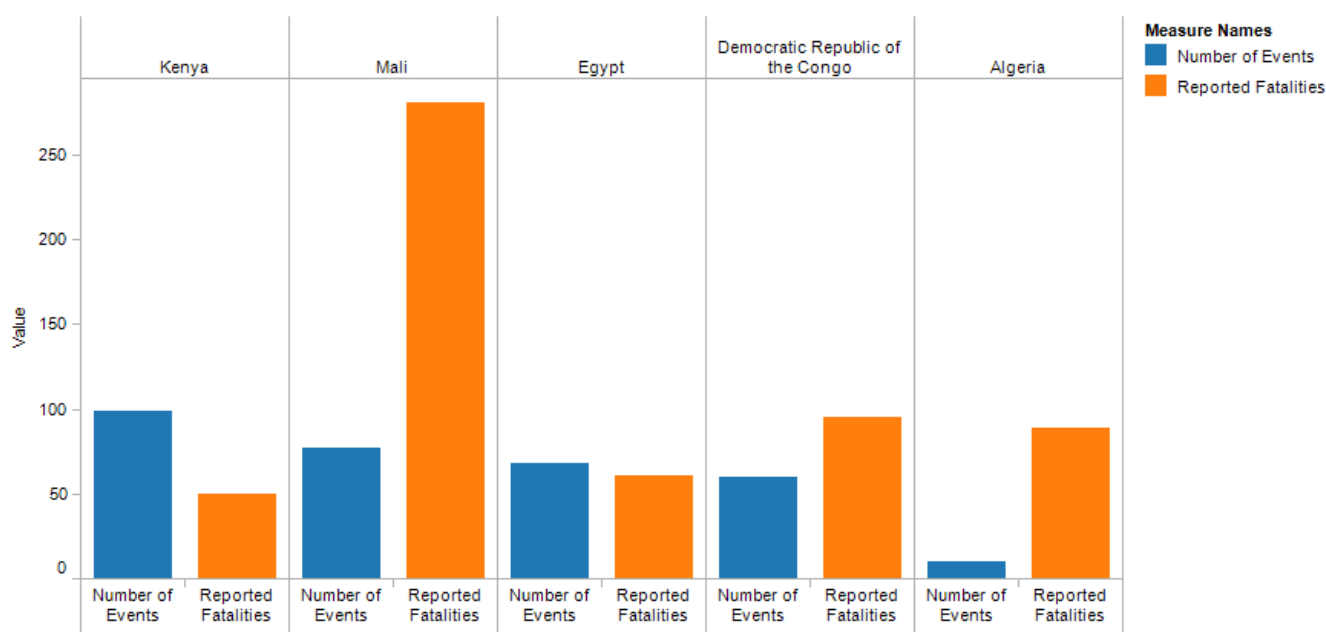

Conflict trajectory, January 2013.

Figure 1: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, January 2013.

1

Algeria

Algeria was at the centre of international attention in January with the dramatic hostage scenario at the In Amenas gas facility in the east of the country. The international community was reminded of the instability which continues to characterize the country over a decade after the end of its brutal civil war. The spectre of that conflict shaped how events unfolded at the facility: Algeria's military appears to have only one mode of engaging with Islamist militants, that of the *éradicateurs* which has dominated Algerian military strategy since the 1990s.

The number of conflict events in Algeria has been fairly stable since 2006/2007, although the level of fatalities has dropped sharply since the height of the civil war in the 1990s (*see* Figure 2). The nature of that conflict has changed significantly, as well, with levels of violence against civilians dropping from 67.9% of overall conflict events in 1997-2000 to 13.4% since 2006. While AQIM has become known internationally for its high-profile attacks on Western

The nature of conflict in Algeriahas changed, with violence against civilians dropping from 67.9% of overall conflict events in 1997 - 2000, to 13.4% of events since 2006.
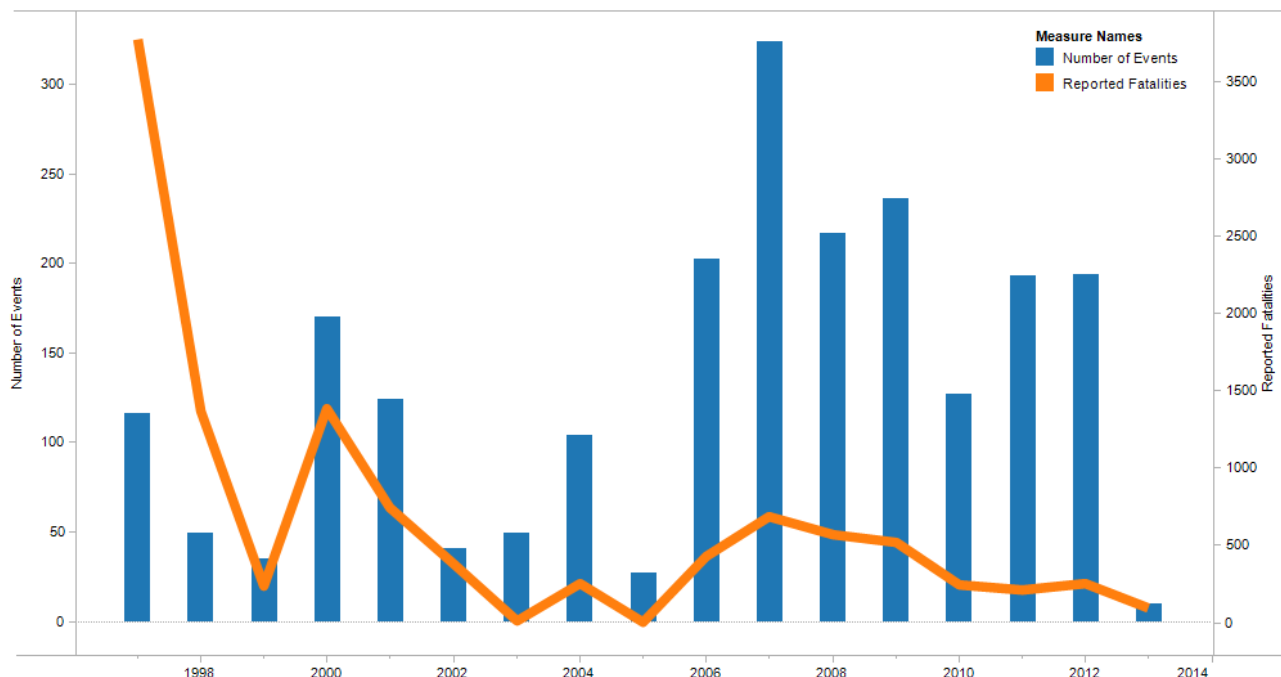
targets and civilians, the vast majority of conflict experienced in Algeria on a daily basis is targeted against the security forces in the form of battles (most frequently, IEDs and ambushes).

This trend has coincided with a geographic shift southwards, with increasing numbers of events being recorded in Algeria's vast southern territory. While most activity is still concentrated in the more densely populated areas in the north of the country, there is evidence of geographic dispersal under way.

The group which claimed responsibility for the attack, *al-Mouwakoune Bi-Dima* (Those Who Signed in Blood), is led by the former Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) official, Mokhtar Belmokhtar. Belmokhtar split from AQIM in late 2012, although the nature of this split remains murky: it has been read variably as an amicable splintering in an attempt to re-orient militant activity towards the nationalist goals of the original Algerian Islamist movements, and as a volatile rift driven by Belmokhtar's own ambition. Much has been made in analyses following the events at In Amenas of Bemokhtar's criminal activity, with a frequent, though false, dichotomy being presented between the profile of a supposedly genuine *jihadist* and a criminal entrepreneur. There is no reason a militant organisation seeking to fund its activities must be either, and it remains to be seen how this new unit will organise and act.

Figure 2: Violent Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Algeria, 1997 - January 2013.

CONFLICT TRENDS (NO. 10):
REAL-TIME ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN POLITICAL VIOLENCE, JANUARY 2013

DR-Congo

Although the violence totals in DR Congo remain stable and relatively unchanged since December of 2012, January 2013 saw an increase in actors. Of the twenty violent groups that now operate, largely in the East, two new actors are of particular interest.

The first is M-26, a militia movement that was created late in 2012, is active in North Kivu and is believed responsible for rapes in the area. Like the M-23 movement, this new group is formed of those who would not integrate in the FARDC and members of a Nyatura veterns group. This group is largely active in areas already plagued by FDLR and Mayi-Mayi Pareco, giving an unsettling impression that the 'marketplace' for violence in DR-Congo is not yet saturated.

Another militia group is the FD-PLO: Defense Forces of the People of Orientale is now active in Aru and formed from EX-FAZ, or 'Forces of Zaire'. This group has recently attacked civilians before heading into South Sudan.

Egypt

Levels of unrest in Egypt since November have rivalled those rates at the peak of the uprising in January and February 2011 (*see* Figure 3). The gap between the populations' expectations of the revolution and the reality it now faces has perhaps never been greater than in the demonstrations held in seeming commemoration of the lost promise of that revolution on the 25th of January.

> **Levels of unrest in Egypt since November have rivalled those rates at the peak of the uprising in January and February 2011, with January 2013 being the single most fatal month since the revolution.**

These demonstrations coincided – in deadly form – with outrage over the sentencing to death of 21 people on charges related to last February's Port Said football violence which left 74 people dead. Supporters from both sides involved in the Port Said incident hold the police partly responsible for the huge number of fatalities, and have directed their anger at President Morsi for failing to reform the security services. Attempts to impose a curfew in Suez, Ismailia and Port Said only sparked further demonstrations against the President and his regime, as anti-Muslim Brotherhood sentiment grew among the general population expressing potent mix of diverse grievances and agendas. Events deteriorated to the point the army chief – in an unprecedented move – warned of the possible collapse of the state.
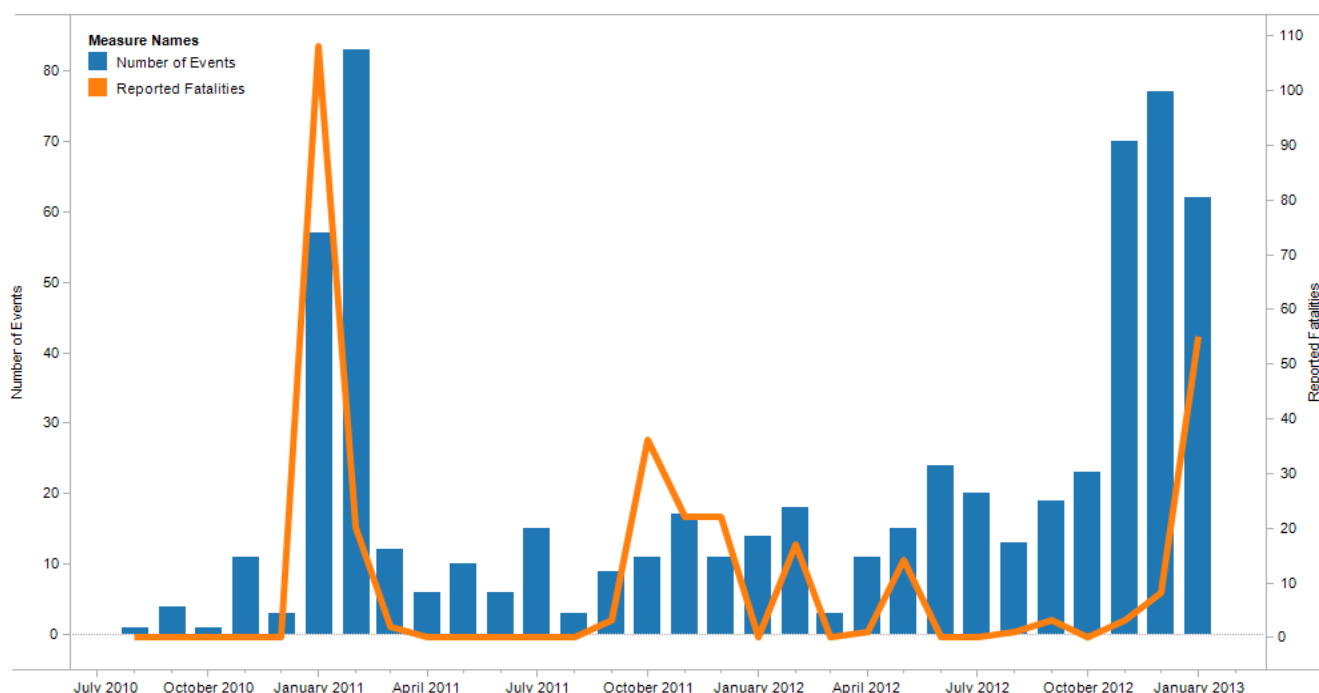

Figure 3: Riot and Protest Events and Reported Fatalities, July 2010 - January 2013.

Kenya

January 2013 witnessed a sharp increase in conflict throughout Kenya. Although all events increased in January over recent months, the most drastic increase is due to protests occurring throughout the state, with clustered activities in Kakamega, Kisumu and Mombasa (*see* Figure 4).

The riots and protests occurring are not related: in Kakamega, traders held protests over market stall distribution in the area; in Kisumu, internal ODM protests took place and in Mombasa, a number of issues relating to local governance, political parties and the Tana River violence of last year led to demonstrations. Despite the variation in reasons, there is no question that local political environments are getting heated throughout the state, in the lead up for the March 4th election.

Comparing recent political violence to that of the last years, two distinct patterns stand out: in long-term trends, the violence of 2012 is similar in levels to that of 2007-2008 (*see* Figure 5). This is possibly due to increased coding of events due to ACLED's real-time data collection, but also likely to increased actors active within the Kenyan political environment. This, coupled with the increase in January 2013, does not bode well for 2013.

> **Over the past 17 years, Kenyan police and military forces have participated in increasing levels of violence. In 2012, these forces were three times as active as they were in 1997 (an election year).**

The second trend is the increase by particular actors in Kenyan violence. Over the past 17 years, Kenya police and military forces participated in far higher rates of violence than noted before: in 2012, these forces were three times as active as they were in 1997 (also an election year); indeed, their January 2013 rates match their overall annual activity rates from 1997-2006.

This is actually a stable pattern throughout Kenya- almost all types of actors (military forces, political militias, communal militias, rioters and protesters) had a similar number of events in January 2013 as they had in all of 1997, although their proportion of overall activity has changed (*see* Figure 6).

Over the past year, there has been a discernible change of activity as we move closer to the election. This is perhaps best displayed by a review of police activity: over the past six months, police are far more active in rioting and protesting, notably compared to January 2012, but they also are active in violence against civilians.

As we move closer to the election, there are dangerous signs that violence is increasing. However, if the constitution and changing institutions of government have any impact on the rate and distribution of violence, then the potential patterns of violent of 2013 should be markedly different from those of 2007-2008.

Political authority has devolved; the large political parties are structured along different ethno-regional alliances, and as the heads of
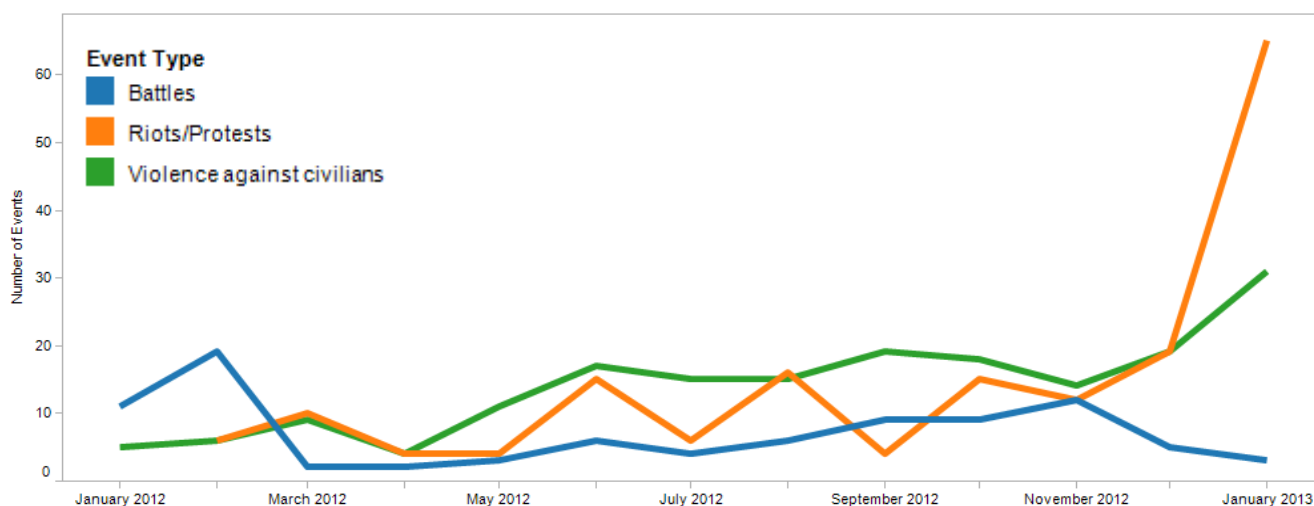

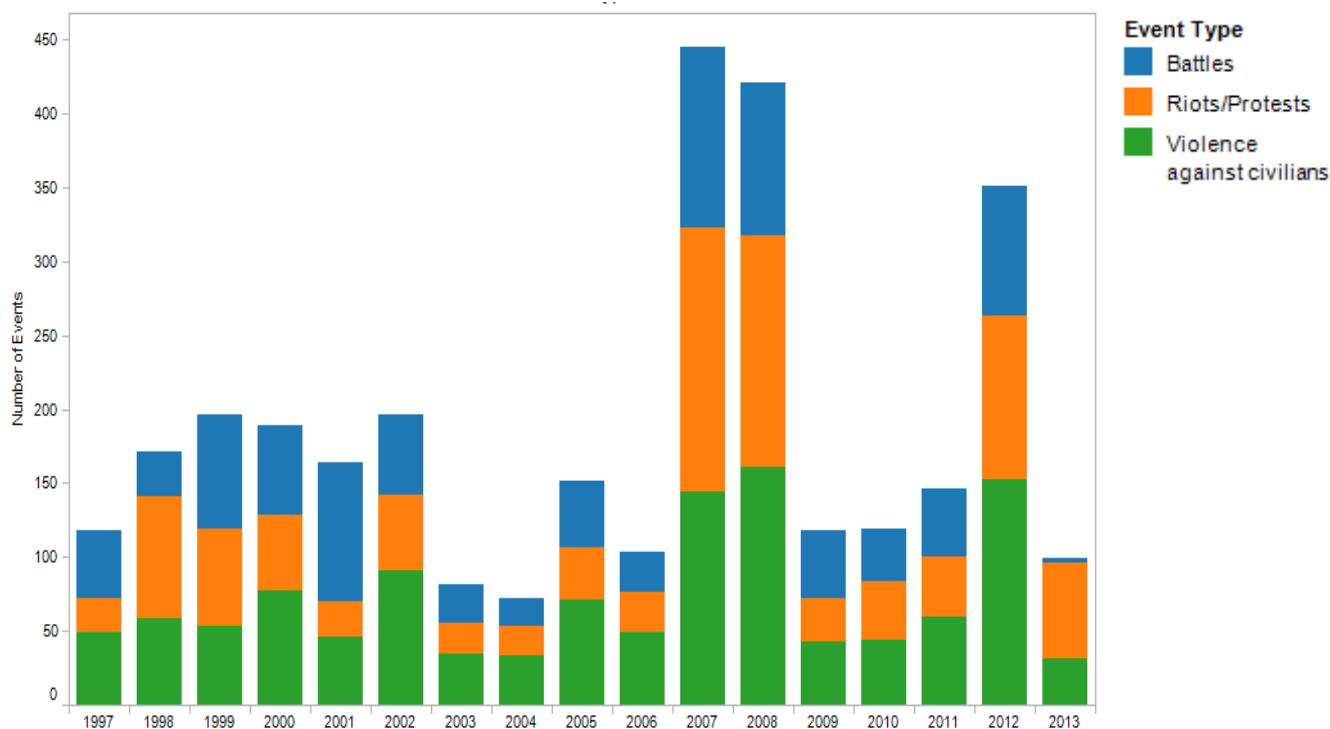**Figure 4: Conflict Events by type, Kenya, January 2012 - January 2013.**

Figure 5: Conflict Events by type, Kenya, 1997 - January 2013.

the Jubilee Coalition (Mr. Ruto and Mr. Kenyatta) are charged by the ICC with crimes from the previous election, this may put a damper on any violence they may be planning.

ACLED will be covering the **upcoming Kenya 2013 elections** in detail with up-to-date analysis, realtime data and regular mapping. Please check the ACLED website in coming weeks for more information on this project.
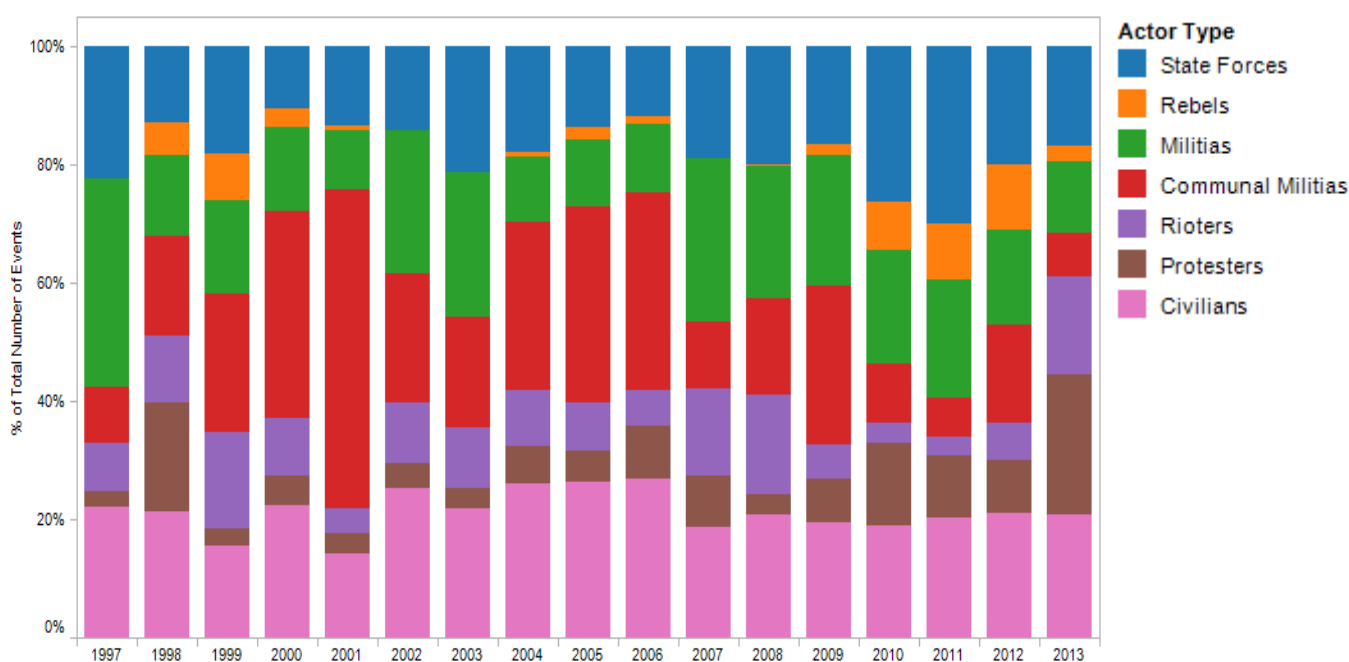

Figure 6: Proportion of Conflict Events by Actor Type (Interaction Terms), Kenya, 1997 - 2013.

Mali

January witnessed a sudden escalation in violent conflict in Mali with the deployment of French troops in response to militants' moves towards the capital, Bamako, in early January (*see* Figure 7). Operation Serval made rapid progress securing population centres across the northern region. Predictably, most militants melted away from urban centres and withdrew to less accessible regions where they will have some opportunity to regroup.

French leadership has been sending somewhat mixed messages regarding the campaign: on the one hand, Defence Minister Le Drian insists forces are engaged in a 'real war,' against jihadist terrorists, involving 'significant losses.' (BBC News, 6 Feb 2013)

On the other, Paris wants to begin withdrawing its 4,000 troops as early as March. The first priority of the French will be avoiding becoming entrenched in a prolonged counter-insurgency campaign, but withdrawing with the very real possibility of AQIM and its allies regrouping and redoubling their efforts would undermine the entire campaign.

Meanwhile, there is the question of what would replace the French-led force. There are talks of handing over to a UN peacekeeping mission on, which the UN has described as increasingly likely. (UN News Centre, 7 Feb 2013)

Nevertheless, Mali's Foreign Minister Coulibaly has been vocal in his opposition to this, stating:

'Today we are fighting terrorism […] If it were to be transformed into a peacekeeping force, you have to define between whom […] Mali and the terrorists? No. Negotiations with terrorists are out of the question.'

(Al Arabiya, 05 Feb 2013)

What is obscured by this simple rhetoric is the diversity of actors and agendas at play in Northern Mali: Tuareg separatists, local Islamist militias, and formally Al-Qaeda-linked groups are organizationally, structurally, and ideologically distinct, and diverge in terms of their conflict profiles and actions.

> **French leadership is keen to begin withdrawing from Mali as soon as March, but there remains the question of what will replace the French force. Mali is vocal in opposition to peacekeeping, maintaining no negotiation with terrorists.**
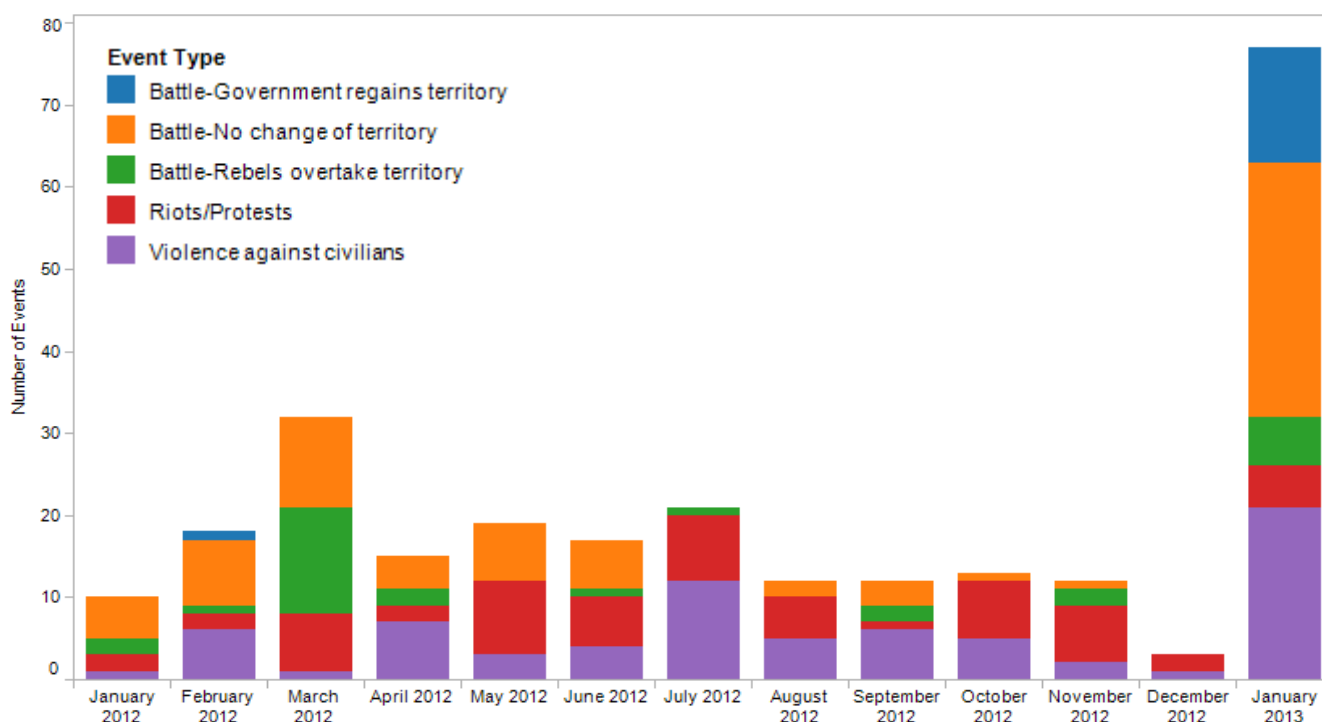

Figure 7: Conflict Events by type, Mali, January 2012 - January 2013.

When Elections Trigger Violence:
Exploring the Causes of Post-Election Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (1997 - 2012)[1]

Why do significant levels of violence mark some elections in Sub-Saharan Africa while others are peaceful? Multiparty elections have become the norm in Sub-Saharan Africa.[2] However, in many of the emerging democracies, elections often lead not to a transfer of power but to an outbreak of violence. With many upcoming elections across Africa, most notably in Kenya and Zimbabwe, it is quite critical to understand the patterns and propensity of electoral violence.

Various explanations contend that the

(a) commitment to democracy is weak, and authoritarian rulers don "the garb of democracy" only to backtrack on such reforms later on; and

(b) elections are inherently destabilizing events as they determine who holds political power and the zero-sum nature of the African political system makes these states more susceptible to violence.

This brief reviews uses ACLED to calculate standardized scores for every Sub-Saharan African country's election and non-election years across two dimensions including the average number of conflict events per year and the average number of such events per 100,000 people. These dimensions were chosen in order to construct a robust baseline measure of violence, and to chart the deviations in violence, both positive and negative, across election and non-election years.[3] Further, it highlights patterns in pre and post election violence, and shows that the expected number of conflict events increases when the opposition rejects the outcome of

an election. Kenya is used throughout the brief to highlight the main themes.

What is Electoral Violence?
Electoral violence is usually disaggregated into four characteristics:

1) Motives: Electoral violence is used to influence the electoral process;

2) Timing: It occurs throughout the electoral process (i.e. in the pre-election phase, in the post-election phase and during the election itself);

3) Actors: It is perpetrated by a number of different actors the most prominent of whom include: political parties (e.g. government and/or opposition); proxies acting on their behalf (e.g. student-, youth- militia-groups and/or thugs); and rebel groups; and state actors such as the police and/or military forces.

4) Activities: It involves the verbal intimidation or physical harm of electoral stakeholders such as voters; the damage or destruction of electoral information such as ballot papers; electoral facilities such as polling stations; and electoral events such as campaign rallies.

It is important to distinguish electoral violence from political violence. Election violence is specifically related to increases in and around the time of contest, and despite widespread rates of general political violence, Sub-Saharan Africa exhibits significant inter- and intra-country variation in the onset

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1. This piece is based on the PhD work of Ed Coughlan, Trinity College Dublin.
2. With the exception of Eritrea, Somalia, and Swaziland.
3. I limit my discussion to the first dimension described above, namely, the average number of conflict events per year, because all of the dimensions give more or less the same results. Further, by 'election year' I mean those years in which an election occurred.

When Elections Trigger Violence:
Exploring the Causes of Post-Election Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (1997 - 2012)

of election violence. Many countries, including Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Coté d'Ivoire, have experienced high levels of election-related violence. Other countries, including Tanzania, Zambia, and Ghana, experience increased violence but to a much lesser extent. Internally, variation is also evident: Kenya, for example, has held four elections (i.e. 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2007) since the introduction of democracy in the early 1990s. Significant levels of violence marked the elections in 1992, 1997, and 2007, while 2002 was peaceful.

Results show that Sub-Saharan Africa exhibits significant inter-country variation in the intensity of electoral violence. Some 40% of election years witnessed violence to some extent or another over the years 1997 to 2009. Of the average number of conflict events per election year, 2% of such years experienced extremely high levels of violence; 9% experienced very high levels; 11% witness high levels; and moderately high levels mark 17%. Moreover, 62% of election years did not experience election-related violence. This result supports the general impression held by policy analysts and scholars alike that such violence is a feature of some but not all elections in Sub-Saharan Africa. These results are set out below in Table 1 and Figure 7 respectively.

Causes of Electoral Violence

It is difficult, if not impossible, to isolate any one reason as to why some elections are violent while others are not. The burgeoning literature is divided between research suggesting structural and contingent causes. Policy analysts and scholars alike argue that some countries are predisposed to such violence than others because of problems associated with the prevailing systems of govern-

ance, the zero sum nature of competition and, not least, ethnic diversity in these countries. Yet, elections often result in violence due to the uncertainties generated by the electoral process itself. The risk of violence is higher in those situations in which the following conditions hold: 1) the stakes of competition are high; 2) the expectations about winning and losing on the part of both the incumbent and the challenger are also high; 3) the outcome of the election is uncertain or open to doubt.

Until recently, the first structural cause dominated research and scholars attributed pre-election violence to political, economic, and social inequalities, arguing that elections often trigger conflict because they crystallize these latent tensions. However, inequalities such as these occur in most if not all Sub-Saharan African countries, and not exclusively in those experiencing election violence. In the last couple of years, scholars have increasingly turned away from this 'default' argument and highlighted the strategic calculations or logic underlying the use of violence. Politicians or proxies acting on their behalf often engage in such violence to manipulate and/or disrupt the electoral process.

In order to contain the uncertainties generated by an election, incumbents often resort to manipulation. Examples include manipulating the actor space by introducing

Variation from Normal Rate of Political Violence	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	2	2%
High	12	9%
Moderately High	14	11%
Increase	23	17%
Stable or Lower	82	62%

Table 1: Average Number of Events Per Election Year, Sub-Saharan Africa.

When Elections Trigger Violence:
Exploring the Causes of Post-Election Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (1997 - 2012)

'nationality clauses' that disenfranchise sections of the electorate; manipulating the issue space by playing on issues of identity such as ethnicity; and, finally, manipulating the election itself through vote buying, ballot stuffing, deleting names from the voter list, and expelling voters from polling stations among other devices.

Once the election has begun, changing results are also associated with violence. Kenya is instructive in this regard: On 27th December 2007, Kenya held concurrent presidential and parliamentary elections. After a delay of few days, the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki, was declared the winner. Immediately following this announcement, Raila Odinga, the challenger, rallied his supporters and took to the streets to protest and overturn the result. Violence ensued and some 2,000 people died as a result. Kibaki's party, the Party of National Unity (PNU) and Odinga's party, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), both claimed they had won the election.

Indeed, the official results reported that the former had won 46.4 percent of the vote to the latter's 44.1. Despite these results, Kibaki performed significantly worse in all of Kenya's provinces excluding Rift Valley when the results of the author's exit poll are juxtaposed alongside those of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) (Gibson & Long,

> The electoral challenger competes in a two-fold sense by 1) participating in the election, and 2) accepting the results. Thus, the challenger is in an advantageous position as the legitimacy of the election often hangs on the decision to participate.

2009). Conversely, Odinga performed considerably better in all but one of these provinces when the exit poll results are released (*see* Figure 7 and Figure 8).

Post-election Violence

Post election violence is often associated with the strategic calculations and logic around the result distribution. Both the incumbent and challenger are in precarious positions: the incumbent wants to decrease the uncertainty but increase the legitimacy of the election. It wants to achieve the former by manipulating the election and the latter by persuading the challenger to compete.

Importantly, the challenger competes in a two-fold sense by: 1) participating in the election; and 2) accepting the results.

Specifically, in the post-election phase, it must decide whether to accept or reject the election results. Thus, the challenger is in an advantageous position as the legitimacy of an election often hangs on its decision to participate in and accept the results of an election. The challenger's decision in this regard is often contingent on its size and, by extension, its power. Thus, it is more likely to reject and contest an election result if it is in a position to do so and, conversely, less likely to dispute a result if not.

In testing the more general argument that post-election violence is related to the decision on the part of the opposition to participate in *and* accept the results of an election, an analysis shows that if results are mot accepted by the challenger, the expected number of conflict events more than doubles (i.e. an increase of roughly 57 percent). In addition, is violence occurs before the election starts, the likelihood that it will lead to post-election violence is exceedingly strong. The expected number of events increases eightfold.

4 The data include all presidential and parliamentary elections (i.e. both first and second round) held in Sub-Saharan Africa over the years, 1997 to 2012. The dependent variable measures the number of conflict events in the three months following an election. Data on the main explanatory variable, 'Results Not Accepted' is based, primarily, on assessments made in the US State Department's *Human Rights Reports* and the Journal of Democracy's *Election Watch.* Accordingly, this variable is coded '1' if the aforementioned sources state that the result was rejected by the main competitors and '0' otherwise. A number of control variables likely to affect post-election violence are also included in the analysis.

When Elections Trigger Violence:
Exploring the Causes of Post-Election Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (1997 - 2012)

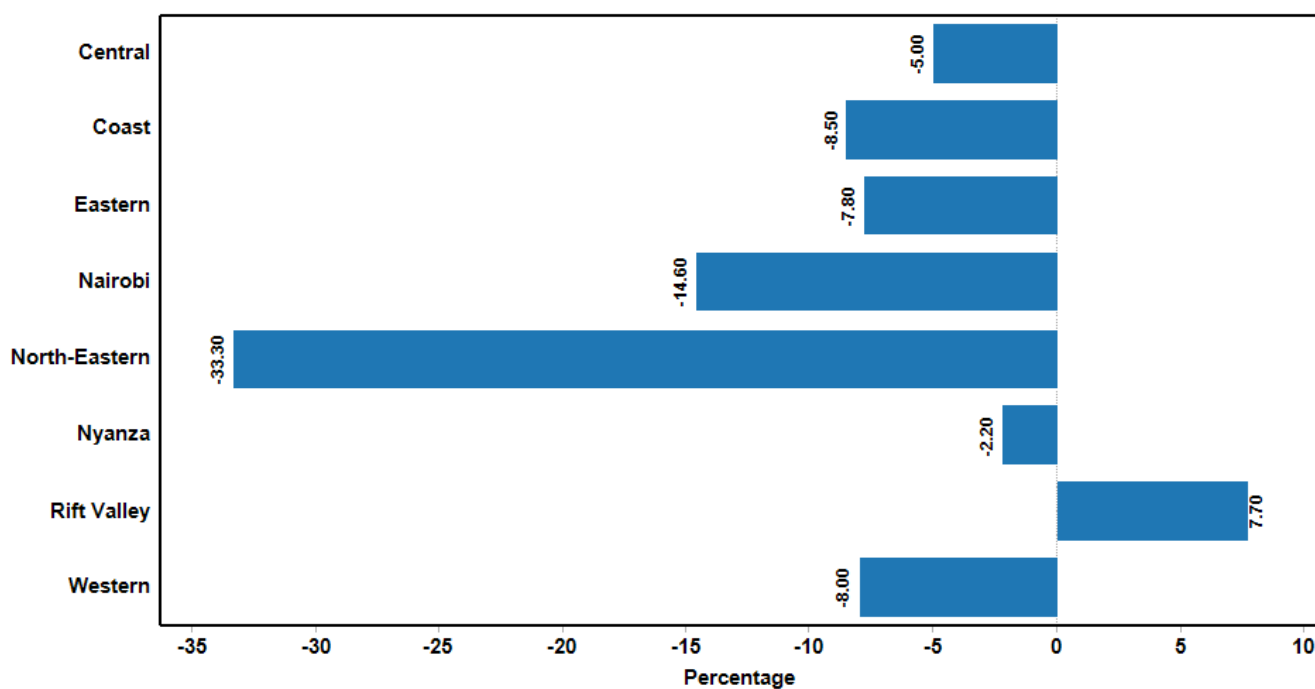

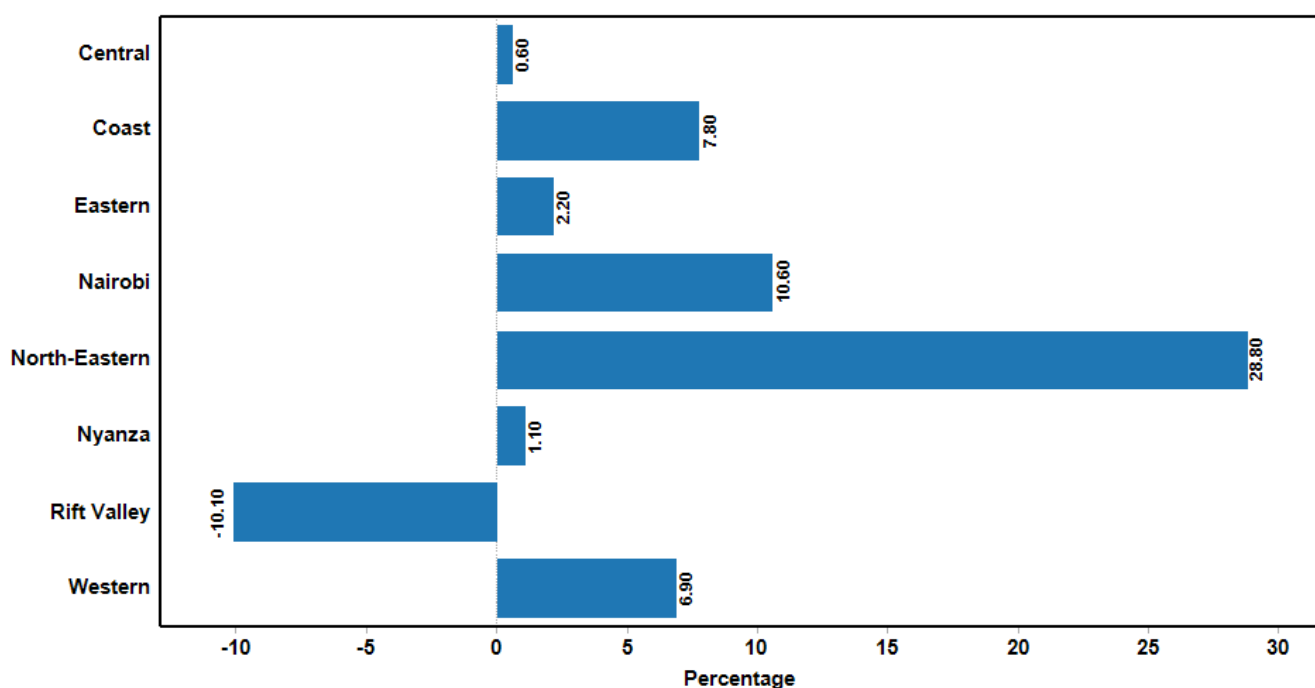Figure 7: % Difference between Exit Poll and ECK Results: Mwai Kibaki

Figure 8: % Difference between Exit Poll and ECK Results: Raila Odinga

10

When Elections Trigger Violence:
Exploring the Causes of Post-Election Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (1997 - 2012)

Conclusion:

In summary, over half of all African elections occur in a peaceful environment. This is, in part, related to the continuing democratic transitions of some countries, but also to how elections are often held after extensive conflict.

Hence, in accordance to the baseline model developed for this analysis, elections typically do not generate violence levels similar to that of a civil war. Yet, over 40% of African elections are marred by significant increases in daily violence.

Although incumbents are often responsible for pre-election manipulation and violence, both the challenger and incumbents are capable and willing to engage in election and post-election violence. The implication of this study is that the motives, timing, actors and activities change at different election stages, and this is clearly evident in the levels and distribution of violence.

> **Over 40% of African elections are marred by significant increases in daily violence. Although incumbents are often responsible for pre-election manipulation of violence, both the challenger and incumbents are capable and willing to engage in election and post-election violence.**

Yet, across all electoral stages, inter-party competition is evident, as is the nature of the state: those countries with independent judiciaries, electoral commissions and open media are far more likely to survive elections un-scathed. However, these factors do not guarantee peace. In addition, intra-party competition may also underlie significant violence, especially during early succession struggles.

Evidence of this phenomenon is found in recent violence across Zimbabwe and South Africa. This underscores the reality of political competition across the continent: regional development is believed to be significantly tied to elite access to government power, and hence the stakes are exceedingly high.

About the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset

ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset) is the most comprehensive public collection of political violence data for developing states. These data contain information on the specific dates and locations of political violence, the types of event, the groups involved, fatalities and changes in territorial control. As of early 2013, ACLED has recorded over 75,000 individual events. In the recently launched Version 3, ACLED has coded over 65,000 conflict events which took place in Africa between 1997 - 2012 inclusive.

The data have the following breakdown: 40% are battles between armed actors; 34% are events in which civilians are directly targeted and harmed; 18% are riots and protests; and 7.5% is non-violent activity including armed group recruitment, high-profile arrests, troop movements or the establishment of bases or headquarters.

ACLED collects real-time data on a monthly basis for select high-risk states in Africa. Real-time data is available via the Climate Change and African Political Stability (CCAPS) website, and is published in ACLED format with each new version of the dataset.

The information in this issue of ACLED *Conflict Trends* was compiled from a variety of sources, including ACLED data, compiled from news reports; NGO reports; and Africa-focused security reports. Citations refer to African Confidential (*AfCon*); Agence France Presse (*AFP*); Reuters News Service; BBC News; *African Arguments*; and various national news media outlets.

Further information on sources of data, coding practices and archived data from ACLED Versions 2 (1997 - 2011) and 1 (1997 - 2009/2010) can be found online at www.acleddata.com/data. Back-dated issues of *Conflict Trends*, in addition to ACLED working papers, and academic research can be found at http://www.acleddata.com/research-and-publications/.